



DAVID CHARLES JONES

21 June 1978 — 18 June 1982

David Jones was born on 9 July 1921 in Aberdeen, South Dakota. He grew up in Minot, North Dakota, where he often rode his bicycle to a nearby airfield and dreamed of becoming a combat pilot. After graduating from the local high school, he attended the University of North Dakota and Minot State College. Jones left college in April 1942, volunteering for the US Army Air Corps. An aviation cadet, he earned his commission and pilot wings in 1943.

After serving as a flying instructor in New Mexico, Arizona, and Texas, Lieutenant Jones was assigned to the 3d Emergency Rescue Squadron of the Fifth Air Force in Japan in 1945. He began as a unit pilot, flying Catalina flying boats, and rose to command the squadron. He was promoted to captain in April 1946. From 1948 to 1949 Jones was a unit instructor and then Assistant Operations and Training Officer with the 2236th Air Force Reserve Training Center, Godman Field, Kentucky. During this period, he also attended the Air Tactical School at Tyndall Air Force Base, Florida; the Atomic Energy Course at Keesler Air Force Base, Mississippi; and the Armed Forces Special Weapons Course at Sandia Base, New Mexico.

Assigned to the 19th Bombardment Squadron at March Air Force Base, California, in January 1950, Jones was promoted to major in February 1951. During his three and one-half years with the 19th, he rose to aircraft commander, then operations officer, and finally commander of the squadron. He flew more than three hundred hours on combat missions over North Korea when the squadron was one of the first bombardment units committed to the

General David C. Jones
United States Air Force



Captain Jones following award of the Distinguished Flying Cross, October 1950.

Korean War. In May 1953 Jones transitioned from bombers to tankers, taking command of the 22d Air Refueling Squadron at March. Promoted to lieutenant colonel in June 1953, he remained at March but returned to bombers the following year as Commander of the 33d Bombardment Squadron.

Jones served at Headquarters, Strategic Air Command (SAC), Offutt Air Force Base, Nebraska, during SAC's buildup. Assigned in September 1954, he was an operations planner in the Bomber Mission Branch until January 1955, when the SAC Commander in Chief, General Curtis LeMay, selected him as

his aide. Promoted in April 1957, Colonel Jones became Director of Materiel and later Deputy Commander for Maintenance of SAC's 93d Bombardment Wing at Castle Air Force Base, California.

After graduating from the National War College in 1960, Jones was assigned to the Air Staff's Operations Directorate for four years. As Chief of the Manned Systems Branch, he worked on the B-70 bomber project. He next served as Deputy Chief and then Chief of the Strategic Division. After F-100 and F-4 training, he assumed command of the 33d Tactical Fighter Wing, Eglin Air Force Base,



General Jones, as Air Force Chief of Staff, greets President Gerald R. Ford, 1975. Secretary of Defense James R. Schlesinger and Deputy Secretary of Defense William P. Clements look on.

Florida, at its activation in 1965 and brought it to operationally ready status.

Jones then served in key staff assignments with US Air Forces, Europe (USAFE). In October 1965 he became USAFE Inspector General, responsible for inspecting units at over ninety installations in ten countries. He was promoted to brigadier general in December 1965. In January 1967 he became USAFE Chief of Staff and in June Deputy Chief of Staff for Plans and Operations. He received his second star in November 1967.

In February 1969, Jones was assigned to Headquarters, Seventh Air Force, Tan Son Nhut Airfield, Republic of Vietnam, as Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations. He became Vice Commander in June. Promoted to lieutenant general, he returned to SAC in August 1969 as Commander of the Second Air Force, headquartered at Barksdale Air Force Base, Louisiana.

In April 1971 Jones returned to USAFE as Vice Commander in Chief. He assumed command of USAFE and Fourth Allied Tactical

Air Force in August and was promoted to general in September. In his NATO capacity as Commander of Fourth Allied Tactical Air Force, General Jones directed an international planning team that integrated Central Region air forces into a more cohesive organization. Central to this effort was his creation of a small operational and planning headquarters, Allied Air Forces, Central Europe.

After a career which had included operational and command positions in bomber, tanker, training, and tactical fighter units as well as headquarters staff positions, General Jones became Chief of Staff of the Air Force in July 1974. In that position, he advocated the development of high-technology weapons systems, reorganized the Air Force command structure, and substantially reduced headquarters staffs. Appointed by President Richard M. Nixon, General Jones subsequently developed a close working relationship with Secretary of Defense Harold Brown and President Jimmy Carter. In April 1978 Carter nominated him to be Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

The nomination was controversial. Critics in the military and Congress argued that Jones should have fought to reverse the President's 1977 decision to cancel the B-1 bomber. General Jones, however, believed that the Air Force's earlier efforts to prove the error of President John F. Kennedy's decision to cancel the B-70 had been detrimental to the long-term interests of the service. Although Jones was a strong advocate of the B-1, he maintained that it was wrong to try to overturn the decision of the Commander in Chief.

General Jones became the ninth Chairman on 21 June 1978. He was the only Chairman who was not a college or service academy graduate. Jones served four years under two Presidents. With the four years that he had served as Air Force Chief of Staff, his tenure on the Joint Chiefs of Staff was longer

than that of any other member in JCS history. He presided over the Joint Chiefs of Staff during a period of increasing Soviet military power and the emergence of militant Islam as a threat to pro-Western regimes in the Persian Gulf region. His tenure as Chairman saw increased funding for defense in response to the Soviet threat and continuing JCS advocacy of strategic force modernization despite progress on strategic arms control.

Jones accompanied President Carter to Vienna in June 1979 for the final stage of the SALT II negotiations with the Soviet Union. While the Joint Chiefs had reservations about aspects of the completed agreement, Jones's congressional testimony reflected their view that the limitations it imposed did not themselves pose a danger to the United States. He cautioned, however, that maintenance of strategic parity within these limits required ongoing strategic modernization and warned that there was a risk that SALT II could become "a tranquilizer to the American people." On balance, the Joint Chiefs judged the agreement to be "adequately verifiable" and recommended its ratification. However, Soviet intervention in Afghanistan in December 1979 doomed already slim prospects for Senate approval, and President Carter withdrew the agreement.

When the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan raised fears that Soviet forces there might move into neighboring Iran, where an anti-Western militant Islamic regime had taken power in early 1979, President Carter created a rapid deployment force (RDF) for Southwest Asia to counter any such attempt in the region. Subsequently, at the Secretary of Defense's direction, General Jones oversaw planning for the transformation of the RDF into a regional unified command. Planning for what in 1983 became the US Central Command was essentially completed during his chairmanship.



General Jones with General John W. Vessey, Jr., 1982.

After Iran refused to release US Embassy personnel taken hostage during the November 1979 seizure of the embassy by followers of Iranian leader Ayatollah Ruholla Khomeini, President Carter in early 1980 directed the JCS

to plan a rescue effort. General Jones oversaw the planning, which was accomplished in secrecy outside the existing command structure; the result was a proposal for a multi-service mission involving Air Force transports,

Army commandos, and Navy helicopters piloted by Marines. The President approved the mission after General Jones informed him that the JCS believed that the plan was militarily feasible and had a good chance of succeeding. When mechanical problems and weather conditions caused failures or crashes of several aircraft, the mission was aborted. Congressional and Defense Department investigations found that lack of joint training and joint command and control at the tactical level had contributed to the failure. In response, the Joint Chiefs in August 1980 established a counter-terrorist joint task force as a field operating agency to conduct extensive training in joint planning and command and control.

General Jones bore the brunt of criticism for the failure of the hostage rescue mission. When President Carter nominated him for a second term, congressional opponents attacked Jones both for the failure of the raid and for his support of the administration's defense and foreign policies. However, on 19 June 1980 the Senate voted overwhelmingly to confirm him. After Ronald Reagan's victory in

the November 1980 presidential election, critics of Jones launched a campaign to persuade Reagan to dismiss the Chairman. But President Reagan decided to retain Jones.

General Jones had become increasingly dissatisfied with the operation of the joint system. During his last year as Chairman, he conducted an extensive review of the system's structural problems. This resulted in a proposal for changes to the National Security Act to improve the quality and timeliness of military advice and the combined readiness and effectiveness of the nation's combat forces. His central recommendation was that the Chairman, rather than the corporate JCS, should be the principal military adviser to the President and Secretary of Defense. His proposal for JCS reform prompted the most active debate on defense organizational issues since the 1950s. After his retirement on 18 June 1982, General Jones continued to be an active participant in this debate. He saw his ideas come to fruition with the 1986 passage of the Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act.

David Charles Jones

General, USAF

Promotions

Dates

Temporary

Permanent

2LT		06 Feb 43
1LT	28 Feb 44	06 Feb 46
CPT.	11 Apr 46	25 Oct 48
MAJ	05 Feb 51	23 Jan 52
LTC.	01 Jun 53	01 Jul 59
COL	23 Apr 57	22 Dec 60
BG	01 Dec 65	10 Feb 66
MG	01 Nov 67.	24 Jan 69
LTG.	01 Aug 69	
GEN	01 Sep 71	

Assignments

Dates

From

To

Aviation Cadet, Roswell, NM; Advanced Flying Instructor, Roswell, NM; Yuma, AZ; Pecos, TX; and Hobbs, NM	1942	1945
Pilot; Operations and Training Officer; Commander, 3d Emergency Rescue Squadron, Fifth Air Force, Japan	1945	1948
Unit Instructor, 2235th Air Force Rescue Training Center, Godman Field, KY	1948	1949
Student, Air Tactical School, Tyndall Air Force Base, FL	1949	1949
Student, Atomic Energy Course, Keesler Air Force Base, MS	1949	1949
Assistant Operations and Training Officer, Godman Field, KY	1949	1949
Student, Special Weapons Course, Sandia Base, NM	1949	1950
Pilot and Operations Officer; Commander, 19th Bombardment Squadron, March Air Force Base, CA, and Okinawa	1950	1953
Commander, 22d Air Refueling Squadron, March Air Force Base, CA.	1953	1954
Commander, 33d Bombardment Squadron, March Air Force Base, CA.	1954	1954

Assignments	Dates	
	From	To
Operations Planner, Bomber Mission Branch, Headquarters, Strategic Air Command, Offutt Air Force Base, NE	1954	1954
Aide to Commander in Chief, Strategic Air Command, Offutt Air Force Base, NE	1955	1957
Director of Materiel; Deputy Commander for Maintenance, 93d Bombardment Wing, Castle Air Force Base, CA	1957	1959
Student, National War College, Washington, DC. . .	1959	1960
Chief, Manned Systems Branch; Deputy Chief and then Chief, Strategic Division, Deputy Chief of Staff/Operations, Headquarters, US Air Force, Washington, DC	1960	1964
Student, USAF Operations Training Course, Luke and Davis-Monthan Air Force Bases, AZ . .	1964	1965
Commander, 33d Tactical Fighter Wing, Eglin Air Force Base, FL	1965	1965
Inspector General, Chief of Staff, and Deputy Chief of Staff/Plans and Operations, Headquarters, US Air Forces Europe, Wiesbaden Air Base, Germany	1965	1969
Deputy Chief of Staff/Operations and Vice Commander, Seventh Air Force, Tan Son Nhut Air Base, Vietnam	1969	1969
Commander, Second Air Force, Barksdale Air Force Base, LA	1969	1971
Vice Commander in Chief, US Air Forces, Europe, Wiesbaden Air Base, Germany	1971	1971
Commander in Chief, US Air Forces, Europe, Wiesbaden Air Base, Germany (Ramstein Air Base, Germany after March 1973) and Commander, Fourth Allied Tactical Air Forces, Ramstein Air Base, Germany	1971	1974
Chief of Staff, US Air Force, Washington, DC. . . .	1974	1978
Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, Washington, DC. . .	1978	1982

Principal US Military Decorations

Defense Distinguished Service Medal (with 2 oak leaf clusters)

Air Force Distinguished Service Medal (with oak leaf cluster)

Legion of Merit

Distinguished Flying Cross

Bronze Star

Air Medal (with oak leaf cluster)

Air Force Commendation Medal